

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A computer system comprising:
- 5 a bus;
- a processor coupled to said bus;
- a display device coupled to said bus, said display device operable to provide a display; and
- a user interface coupled to said bus and for controlling said display, said
- 10 user interface comprising a plurality of flexible layers coupled along an edge in a stack;
- wherein movement of one or more of said flexible layers causes said display to change in a prescribed manner.
2. The computer system of Claim 1 wherein said movement comprises separation of at least a portion of a first flexible layer from a second flexible layer.
3. The computer system of Claim 2 wherein a first conducting pad on
- 20 a surface of said first flexible layer is in electrical contact with a second conducting pad on a facing surface of said second flexible layer, wherein said separation of said first and second flexible layers is detected by separation of said first and second conducting pads.
4. The computer system of Claim 1 wherein said movement comprises bending of a flexible layer.

5. The computer system of Claim 4 wherein said bending is detected using an instrument selected from the group consisting of: a strain gauge, an optical sensor and an accelerometer.

5 6. The computer system of Claim 1 wherein said change to said display is according to an order in which said flexible layers are moved.

7. The computer system of Claim 1 wherein said change to said display is according to an amount of deflection of a flexible layer.

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8. The computer system of Claim 1 wherein said change to said display is according to a rate of movement of said flexible layers.

9. The computer system of Claim 1 wherein said user interface is
15 coupled to a housing of said computer system.

10. The computer system of Claim 1 wherein said user interface is coupled to a peripheral device communicatively coupled to said computer system.

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11. A method for controlling a display in a computer system, said method comprising the steps of:

a) generating a display on a display device;

b) detecting movement of one or more flexible layers of a user interface,

25 wherein said user interface comprises a plurality of flexible layers coupled along an edge in a stack; and

c) translating said movement into a prescribed change to said display.

12. The method as recited in Claim 11 wherein said step b) comprises the step of:

detecting a separation of a portion of a first flexible layer from a second
5 flexible layer of said user interface.

13. The method as recited in Claim 12 wherein said step b) further comprises the steps of:

detecting a separation of a first conducting pad on a surface of said first
10 flexible layer from a second conducting pad on a facing surface of said second flexible layer, wherein said separation of said first and second conducting pads indicates said separation of said first and second flexible layers.

14. The method as recited in Claim 11 wherein said step b) comprises the step of:

detecting a deflection of a flexible layer.

15. The method as recited in Claim 14 wherein said deflection is detected using an instrument selected from the group consisting of: a strain
20 gauge, an optical sensor and an accelerometer.

16. The method as recited in Claim 11 wherein said step c) comprises the step of:

changing said display according to an order in which said flexible layers
25 are moved.

17. The method as recited in Claim 11 wherein said step c) comprises the step of:

changing said display according to an amount of deflection of said flexible layer.

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18. The method as recited in Claim 11 wherein said step c) comprises the step of:

changing said display according to a rate of movement of said flexible layers.

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19. The method as recited in Claim 11 wherein said user interface is coupled to a housing of said computer system.

20. The method as recited in Claim 11 wherein said user interface is coupled to a peripheral device communicatively coupled to said computer system.

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21. A portable computer system comprising:
a housing;
a bus disposed within said housing;
a processor coupled to said bus;
a display device coupled to said bus, said display device operable to provide a display; and
a user interface coupled to said bus and for controlling said display, said user interface comprising a plurality of flexible layers in a stack coupled to said housing;

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wherein movement of one or more of said flexible layers causes said display to change in a prescribed manner.

22. The portable computer system of Claim 21 wherein said
5 movement comprises separation of at least a portion of a first flexible layer from a second flexible layer.

23. The portable computer system of Claim 22 wherein a first
conducting pad on a surface of said first flexible layer is in electrical contact with
10 a second conducting pad on a facing surface of said second flexible layer,
wherein said separation of said first and second flexible layers is detected by separation of said first and second conducting pads.

24. The portable computer system of Claim 21 wherein said
15 movement comprises bending of a flexible layer.

25. The portable computer system of Claim 24 wherein said bending
is detected using an instrument selected from the group consisting of: a strain
gauge, an optical sensor and an accelerometer.

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26. The portable computer system of Claim 21 wherein said change to
said display is according to an order in which said flexible layers are moved.

27. The portable computer system of Claim 21 wherein said change to
25 said display is according to an amount of deflection of a flexible layer.

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